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BALANCED FOOD POWDER COMPOSITION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention concerns the use of a balanced food powder blend
5 composition, more particularly to a neutral powder composition that contains a balanced quantity of carbohydrate, fat or oil, and protein.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

It is known in clinical nutrition, such as in enteral feeding, to have a composition
10 comprising a protein source, a carbohydrate source and a lipid source. This is the object of U.S. Patent No. 5,589,468 concerning a liquid enteral feeding designed for elderly patients.

U.S. Patent No. 5,916,612, the entire contents of which is incorporated herein by reference, describes a granular food product for preparation of instant foods that is prepared
by mixing an oil or fat with an edible carbohydrate and/or protein powder materials to
15 obtain a first mixture, and then further edible carbohydrate and/or protein powder materials are mixed with the first mixture to obtain a second mixture which is powdery or dough-like and that mixture is formed into granules by moistening and particle-to-particle contacting, and then the granules are dried.

The present invention relates to production of a free flowing and rapidly dispersible
20 and/or soluble granular food product.

There are also commercially available on the market products providing either proteins, calories, or both, but these products do not provide a balanced blend of nutrients, they alter the taste of food, and they are not cost effective sources of either calories or proteins.

25 What is needed is a composition for normal human consumption, which can be directly and simultaneously added to a meal.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide to the consumer a product which
30 can be added to a meal, wherein the product has a balanced calorie and protein content, is not expensive, and does not alter the taste of the basic food. All these objectives are met

according to the invention which concerns the use of a balanced powder blend composition that includes at least one fat or oil source, at least one carbohydrate source, and at least one protein source, wherein said composition is added to a food.

In one aspect, the invention includes a balanced powder composition for adding to food. The balanced powder composition includes at least one fat or oil source, at least one carbohydrate source, and at least one protein source. The balanced powder composition is substantially devoid of flavor so that it can be admixed with different foodstuffs without substantially changing the flavor or texture of the foodstuffs. The balanced powder composition has an energetic amount of protein between about 20% and 30%, of fat or oil between about 40% and 50%, and of carbohydrate between about 25% and 35%. The balanced powder composition may further include an emulsifier at between about 0.1 to about 1% by weight. In one preferred embodiment, the carbohydrate source includes maltodextrin, the fat or oil source includes canola oil, and the protein source includes whey protein, casein, a casein salt, or a mixture thereof.

In a second aspect of the invention, the invention includes a method of manufacturing the above-described balanced powder composition. The method includes admixing between about 0.8 and 1.2 parts fat or oil, between about 1.5 and 2 parts carbohydrate, between about 1.2 and 1.6 parts protein, between about 0.01 and 0.03 parts emulsifier, and between about 1.1 and about 1.7 parts water to form a mixture. This mixture is then heated to between about 70° C and about 85° C. Of course, individual components and/or the mixture may be preheated. The next step involves homogenizing the mixture. Finally, the homogenized mixture is dried to form a free flowing powder, for example by spray drying. The powder composition has a neutral flavor and is substantially devoid of flavor when admixed with another food.

In a third aspect of the invention, the invention includes a method of enhancing the nutritional value of a food. The method includes the steps of providing a powder composition of neutral flavor comprising at least one fat or oil source, at least one carbohydrate source and at least one protein source; and adding the powder composition to a food, and wherein the powder composition does not change the flavor of the food.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The composition of the invention is a balanced powder blend composition, where the balance concerns both the energetic content as well as the protein content. This is a product which can be very conveniently used: the consumer has only to sprinkle it on or
5 admix it with the considered food. The product enhances the basic food by reducing the possible deficiencies of the basic meal of certain persons.

The powder blend composition of the present invention can be used in all different types of food, including both hot food and cold food. For example, concerning hot food, it is possible to use the composition in a soup, in a gravy, on vegetables, on a meat or
10 incorporated into a meat, on cooked potatoes and also in liquids, for example coffee or tea. Exemplary use with cold food includes adding the composition to milk or to ice-cream.

The composition of the present invention can be used in hospitals, in the food service area, in the clinical nutrition area, and also for private use. The product can also be used as a food supplement in various nutraceutical formulations and beverages.

15 As stated above, one objective of the invention is to have an absolutely neutral composition, so that it is possible to use the composition very broadly. The composition is advantageously tasteless, or contains a very neutral flavor that is easily masked by other foods.

In one embodiment, there are no vitamins and/or mineral supplements added the
20 composition, so that it is possible to keep the price of said product very low. But, it is also possible to add in the composition of the invention vitamins and/or minerals. In one embodiment, the composition provides at least 100% of the USRDA of selected vitamins and minerals.

In one embodiment, there is no dietary fiber added to the composition. Fiber may
25 interfere with using the composition with various foods. In one embodiment, the composition may contain a soluble fiber.

The carbohydrate source used in the composition is preferably maltodextrin. The use of other carbohydrates may lead to a too sweet product. Any type of maltodextrin can be used, for example maltodextrin from corn syrup or any other vegetable material.

30 The fat or oil source used in the composition can be either a vegetable fat or oil or an animal fat or oil or a mixture thereof. The vegetable fat or oil is preferably taken from the

group consisting of soy oil, corn oil, rapeseed oil, sunflower oil, palmolein, alone or in mixture. In a preferred composition, the rapeseed oil is canola oil. In the case of animal oil or fat, the source is preferably milk fat.

5 The protein source used in the composition is preferably whey protein, casein, a casein salt, or a mixture thereof. The ratio whey protein to casein and/or casein salt in a mixture can advantageously vary from 1:10 to 1:0.1, preferably from 1:4 to 1:0.25. For example, in one embodiment the ratio by weight of whey protein to casein and/or casein salt may range from 1:4 to 1:1.

10 The composition of the present invention contains protein that provides between about 20% and about 30% of the energetic content of the composition. The energetic contribution of fat and/or oil is between about 40% to about 50% of the energetic content of the composition. The energetic contribution of carbohydrate is between about 28% to about 32% of the energetic content of the composition. In a preferred embodiment, the composition of the present invention contains protein that provides between about 20% and
15 about 30%, fat and/or oil that provides between about 44% to about 46%, and carbohydrate that provides between about 28% to about 32% of the energetic content of the composition

More specifically, the powder blend composition has an energetic amount of protein of around 25%, an energetic amount of fat or oil of around 45%, and an energetic amount of carbohydrate of around 30%.

20 The powder blend composition of the present invention typically has, by weight, between about 26% to about 36% of protein, between about 20% and about 30% of fat or oil, and between about 35% and about 45% of carbohydrate. In one preferred embodiment, the composition has, in weight percent, a fat content of about 25%, a protein content of about 31% and a carbohydrate content of about 40%.

25 In this preferred embodiment, the protein is a mixture of whey protein and casein, the carbohydrate is corn syrup, and the oil is canola oil.

The composition of the invention is prepared in the following way. An aqueous phase of the protein, the carbohydrate and the oil or fat is prepared. An emulsifier is advantageously added as needed. In one embodiment, the aqueous phase includes between
30 about 0.8 and 1.2 parts fat or oil, between about 1.2 and 1.6 parts protein, between about 1.5 and 2 parts carbohydrate, between about 0.01 and 0.03 parts emulsifier, and between about

1.1 and about 1.7 parts water. The emulsifier is any food-grade emulsifier, preferably lecithin. The mixture is heated, i.e., preheated, then heated, for example, with steam. Advantageously, the mixture is heated to a temperature between about 70° C and about 85° C. The mixture is then homogenized, and finally is spray-dried. The powder is advantageously free flowing. The powder is recovered and the filling/packaging can be carried out.

It is also possible to add in the composition of the invention further components, like a prebiotic, a flavor enhancer, and a thickener, alone or in combination.

The prebiotic compound known can be any known in the art. The flavor enhancer similarly can be any flavor enhancer known in the art. The thickener can be any thickener known in the art. The composition can also be supplemented with vitamins, minerals, micronutrients, and/or antioxidants. It may be advantageous to add these additives to the mixture prior to homogenizing and drying the powder. Alternatively, the powder of the present invention can be admixed with other powders, for example salts, minerals, and the like, and packaged.

The filling is carried out according to known procedures. It is either possible to fill in a large amount for the food-service area or for hospitals, or in smaller quantities for private use. In the case of the smaller quantities, it is convenient to have quantities for one meal or one day: so, in these cases, the dosages and packaging contain about 10 to 20 grams of the composition. The quantity is not a critical issue.

The powder blend product is preferably prepared and packaged to have a shelf-life at room temperature of at least 12 months. The composition of the invention is ready to use and can be easily dissolved, dispersed or sprinkled on the corresponding food, in solid or liquid form. It is clear that the dissolution is better in or on hot food.

The powder preferably is devoid of any flavor, or at the least has a neutral flavor, so that the powder can be admixed with a wide variety of food-stuffs without changing the flavor of the foodstuffs.

If you consider this addition every day, it is possible to reach a well balanced food intake for persons of a certain age. Because of the neutral taste, there is no influence on the taste of the basic food.

EXAMPLES

By way of example, a suitable composition according to the invention is as follows.

Example 1

- 5 A total of 1000 Kg of sodium caseinate, 230 kg of whey protein, 1500 kg of corn syrup and 870 kg of canola oil were dissolved in 1200 kg of water with 18 kg of lecithin as emulsifier. The mixture was preheated, and then steam heated at 77° C. The mixture was mixed sufficiently to become homogenized. The homogenized mixture was then
- 10 spray-dried to obtain 3600 kg of the balanced powder blend composition. This composition had, in weight percent, a fat content of 25%, a protein content of 31% and a carbohydrate content of 40%. Concerning the protein content, the whey protein represents 20% (46 Kg) and the caseinate 80% (184 Kg). Considering the composition on the energetic point of view, the protein amount was 25%, the oil amount was 45% and the carbohydrate amount was 30%.

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Example 2

A total of 20 g of the composition of Example 1 was added to a soup, wherein it brings the necessary lack of calories and protein. The composition dissolved in the soup and there was no discernable taste difference from untreated soup.